



June 20, 2001

Cancelling Coverage May Cost Lives

McCain-Edwards-Kennedy Would Deny Diagnostic Tests to 14,000 Patients Daily

Earlier this week, Senator Kennedy urged the Senate to act on the “Bipartisan Patient Protection Act” (S. 1052), which he is sponsoring with Senators McCain and Edwards, claiming:

“There are 10,000 doctors every day recommending various diagnostic tests so they can analyze the health care needs of their patients, but patients are denied coverage for these tests.” [*Congressional Record*, June 18, 2001, S6380]

On the contrary, it is the McCain-Edwards-Kennedy bill that would deny coverage for diagnostic tests — to 14,000 Americans every day.

<u>Type of Screening</u>	<u>Screenings Cancelled Annually under S. 1052</u>
Breast	243,000
Pelvic	256,000
Rectal	148,000
Skin	348,000
Visual	203,000
Glaucoma	85,000
Hearing	53,000
Blood Pressure	1,470,000
Strep	59,000
Pap Smears	148,000
Urinalysis	282,000
Pregnancy	15,000

<u>Type of Screening</u>	<u>Screenings Cancelled Annually under S. 1052</u>
Prostate (PSA)	37,000
Blood Lead Level	10,000
Cholesterol Tests	110,000
HIV	6,000
Other STDs	14,000
Hemoglobin	180,000
Other Blood Tests	418,000
EKGs	89,000
X-Rays	222,000
CAT/MRIs	54,000
Mammograms	67,000
Ultrasound	81,000
Other diagnostic screens	457,000
<i>Total*</i>	<i>5,050,000</i>

Every year in America, private health insurance pays for 700 million diagnostic screenings, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. Every year diagnostic tests give patients crucial time to prepare for and fight an often deadly disease.

- Using data prepared by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the independent Lewin Group, it is estimated McCain-Edwards-Kennedy would cause some 1.3 million Americans to lose their health coverage.
- This would cancel coverage for some 5 million diagnostic tests every year and 14,000 diagnostic tests every day.

Hypertension. Prostate cancer. Cervical cancer. Ovarian cancer. Uterine cancer. Breast cancer. Skin cancer. AIDS. If McCain-Edwards-Kennedy robs 1.3 million Americans of their health insurance, these people will be stripped of coverage for early-detection tests and other exams, and so more diseases – some curable if detected early – will go undiagnosed.

Without these vital tests, many Americans will learn too late they have been stricken with cancer and other diseases. Perhaps thousands will unnecessarily lose years of their lives because McCain-Edwards-Kennedy made health coverage too expensive.

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*Sum of tests cancelled may not equal total due to rounding.